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## Viet Nam Gives Basis For Pessimism

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A pessimistic report by a U. S. Central Intelligence Agency officer expresses "serious doubt that victory can be won" in South Viet Nam. Unhappily, his appraisal seems to be far more realistic than some of the optimistic talk of several months ago that American troops could be withdrawn from the Communist - beleaguered nation within the next two years.

Little has occurred since Willard Matthias, the CIA officer, prepared his critical report in June that would discount his view that a prolonged stalemate is far more likely than an early end to the South Vietnamese civil war. On the contrary, stepped-up guerrilla attacks by South Vietnamese Viet Cong, civilian demonstrations and protests

against any type of military dictatorship or bitter and distracting factionalism, both political and religious, at the moment foreshadow even darker days in South Viet Nam, possibly the darkest since the little country became independent of France in 1954.

Although it stands as a likely prize for Communist aggression by North Viet Nam or Red China, South Viet Nam's troubles are mostly with internal forces. Its problems are more political than military. Its war is a civil war, one in which the United States finds itself backing a national government that never has had the allegiance of more than a third of the people or the control of more than a fourth of the country's territory.

Thus while the situation in South Viet Nam may be becoming more critical, it never has been too good. None of the governments with which we have been allied since 1954 has won the allegiance of the people, yet these governments, including that of Premier Ngo Dinh Diem, overthrown and assassinated last year, always have constituted the strongest single force within the country. But none could have survived without U. S. economic and military aid.

In South Viet Nam, it seems, the United States is strongly committed to the independence of a nation whose own people, including a sizable Communist population, are more likely to bring about its downfall than are external forces of aggression. This will be true until the Saigon government can somehow win over the allegiance of its own people.